



(516) 887-7100 Fax (516) 887-7175

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK, INC.
200 Atlantic Avenue, Lynbrook, New York 11563



OCTOBER 2007 NEWSLETTER

**WE WILL
NEVER
FORGET!**

*Theodore
Barbuto
Department
Commander*



***“The nation
that forgets
its***

defenders will be itself forgotten.”
~ Calvin Coolidge (1862-1933) ~

What powerful words! These words can be taken to mean a government forgetting its wounded and disabled veterans by not providing mandatory funding to care for disabled veterans and their families. They can also be taken to grieve for a government that forgets its Prisoners of War and those still Missing in Action. We of the Disabled American Veterans will never forget its defenders. We continue to advocate for our benefits and rights as well as advocate for those currently serving. As for our Missing and Prisoners, we implore our nation to bring our brothers and sisters home!

We now set aside the third Friday in September as National POW/MIA Recognition Day. I was honored to attend the Recognition Day at the Bath VAMC as the guest speaker on behalf of the Disabled American Veterans. Many Veterans' organizations continue to

remember our POW's and MIA's by offering the POW/MIA toast and ceremony at dinners and other solemn occasions. Our government needs to uphold its promise not to leave any service person behind. The Disabled American Veterans continue to work to make our government keep its promises to all veterans and their families.

THE POW/MIA FLAG

Source: www.homeofheroes.com

Prisoners of War, soldiers captured by enemy soldiers during times of war, are casualties that can all too often be easy to forget. You can't ignore the image of crosses lined in neat rows at Arlington, and other National cemeteries, that remind us of the high cost of freedom. In any gathering of veterans, the scars of war wounds and evidence of missing limbs quickly reminds us of the sacrifice of those who have fought for freedom. It is impossible to forget those Killed in Action (KIA) or Wounded In Action (WIA) because the evidence of their sacrifice is ever before us.

Sadly, the same cannot be said for those who are Missing In Action or who may have been taken prisoner by the enemy and never repatriated. Since World War I more than 200,000 Americans have been listed as Prisoners of War or Missing in Action. Less than half of them were returned at the end of hostilities, leaving more than 125,000 American



(516) 887-7100 Fax (516) 887-7175

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK, INC.
200 Atlantic Avenue, Lynbrook, New York 11563



OCTOBER 2007 NEWSLETTER

servicemen Missing In Action since the

During the 14-years of American involvement in Southeast Asia, and specifically the Vietnam War, more than 2,500 Americans were captured or listed as missing in action. The politics of our Nation's most unpopular war could have eclipsed the fate of these dedicated soldiers, were it not for the NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES. As the spouses, children, parents and other family members of soldiers missing in Southeast Asia banded together to keep the plight of their loved ones before the American conscience, the organization grew in strength and influence that reached all the way into the White House. Through the League the missing and the imprisoned servicemen had a voice, but by 1971 something more was needed. Mrs. Michael Hoff, whose husband was among the missing, believed that what the cause lacked was a standard...a flag to remind more fortunate families of those who were still unaccounted for.

It was during this period of time that the People's Republic of China was admitted to the United Nations. Annin & Company was one of the largest manufacturers of flags in the world, and made it their policy to provide flags for each member of that organization. One day, while reading an article in the Jacksonville, Florida Times-Union about this matter, Mrs. Hoff decided to contact Annin's Vice President Norman Rivkees about providing a flag for soldiers captured or

beginning of World War I.

missing. Mr. Rivkees quickly adopted the idea, and turned to one of their advertising agencies to consider drafting a design.

THE BEST DEFENSE

*Sidney Siller, Sr., PDC;
Department Adjutant*

The eternal question for all leaders in any organizational operation is, how we can keep on being successful; advance our cause; and still be faithful to our mission.

Success means different things to many of us. To me it is a benchmark consisting of various achievements that when objectively assessed, amount to progress that reaches the goals set up for us, or by us.

In the Disabled American Veterans, we have a national plan that sets up our strategic goals in every area of our mission. In DAV-NY, we have a supporting strategy that implements our national strategy; in it's plain and honorific theme; to make better lives for disabled veterans and their families.

In DAV-NY, our plan is to develop the next generation of leaders; and to provide them with sufficient funds to keep the current programs alive and fruitful.

The attrition factor by way of membership losses due to the "grim reaper" is a factor that cannot be assuaged. It can only be mitigated by the ability of leadership to recruit new members and keep them active.

DAV-NY has, in the last five years, succeeded in supplementing it's stock of Department leaders. Our PDC's and present line officers are indeed a resource



(516) 887-7100 Fax (516) 887-7175



DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

**DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK, INC.
200 Atlantic Avenue, Lynbrook, New York 11563**

OCTOBER 2007 NEWSLETTER

for the success of our mission. Our blue caps are great.

I am proud to announce that their support and the support of all active leaders and Chapters of DAV-NY has resulted in the recent sale of Admiral Halsey Senior Village. The net proceeds of the sale of Admiral Halsey will be restricted and hopefully will be the seed money to initiate our plan for Assisted Living for senior disabled American veteran's and their wives, or significant others. It is DAV-NY's plan to develop these Assisted Living Facilities on VA properties, and state and city land. And, hopefully, if other

WASHINGTON - The Disabled American Veterans welcomes the appointment of Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Gordon H. Mansfield as Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs following the resignation of Secretary Jim Nicholson.

Mansfield assumes the role under the terms of the Federal Vacancies Reform Act, where a Deputy Secretary begins to serve as the acting officer immediately and automatically upon the occurrence of the vacancy. He will serve until a new Secretary is confirmed by the U. S. Senate.

"Gordon Mansfield has dedicated his life to helping disabled veterans and their families by serving in many leadership roles in private and government agencies," said DAV National Service & Legislative Headquarters Executive Director David W. Gorman. "The experience and

Departments want to join in this program, other DAV's across the nation could enjoy a quality of life that could be extended with their peers.

To me, this would be a success, by advancing our cause, while still being faithful in fulfilling our mission. Someone said success has a thousand fathers, and defeat is an orphan. So, go DAV-NY.

MANSFIELD WELCOMED AS ACTING SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

continuity of leadership that he represents will be very important to the men and women at the VA who have dedicated themselves to serving America's veterans and their families."

"The DAV urges President Bush to nominate a permanent Secretary as quickly as possible, and his first priority is to ensure that the needs of this nation's sick and disabled veterans are being met," Gorman said. "With the current focus on treatment of veterans returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is vital that the President nominate a new Secretary who is committed to ensuring that our veterans receive what they've earned, what they need and what our nation owes them for their service and sacrifice."

Gordon Mansfield was selected as the DAV's Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year for 2006. After his



(516) 887-7100 Fax (516) 887-7175

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK, INC.
200 Atlantic Avenue, Lynbrook, New York 11563



OCTOBER 2007 NEWSLETTER

long recovery from injuries received during combat in Vietnam, Mansfield began practicing law in Ocala, Fla., serving as counsel in a Legal Aid Program, providing assistance to his fellow veterans. He also became involved with forming a DAV Chapter in Marion County, Fla., and is a life member of the DAV.

“Acting Secretary Mansfield is a formidable advocate for disabled veterans and their families, and the DAV welcomes the opportunity to work with him,” said DAV National Adjutant Arthur H. Wilson.

Mansfield has served as Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs since January 2004. His official biography can be viewed here: <http://www1.va.gov/opa/bios/biography.asp?id=30>.

FROM YOUR NSO OFFICE

William F. Gibney, Supervisor Albany

Although we're happy to have certified so many, we would like to see even greater participation among the Chapters. As you know, the Chapter Service Officer Certification Program is designed to enhance the knowledge and professionalism of the non-accredited Chapter Service Officer (CSO), and **must be held annually** to provide for re-certification. We look forward to re-certifying these dedicated members in 2008.

During the most recent Department Convention we conducted training sessions which were attended, at least in part, by seventy seven (77) members. The certification process has now been completed and we have certified fifty two (52) Chapter Service Officers who had been properly appointed by their respective chapters and who had attended the entire two day training session. We mailed a certificate suitable for framing and display to each.

As you know, the Disabled American Veterans has one goal in everything we do — to provide all disabled veterans and their dependents the best service and most professional claims representation available from any source. Keeping this in mind, it is imperative for us to reach out to those who need our assistance. Chapter Service Officers are an integral part of this goal, specifically outlined in Goal 2 of our Strategic Plan.

If we may be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact this office.

William F. Gibney, Supervisor Disabled American Veterans National Service Office Stratton VA Medical Center (272K3) 113 Holland Avenue Albany, NY 12208

MEMORANDUM

**From: Theodore A. Barbuto,
Department Commander**



(516) 887-7100 Fax (516) 887-7175

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK, INC.
200 Atlantic Avenue, Lynbrook, New York 11563



OCTOBER 2007 NEWSLETTER

To: All DAV Members
Re: Election Day

Election Day is Tuesday, November 6, 2007. Please vote! It is our right and our duty to get out and vote for those candidates supporting issues pertaining to our troops and our Veterans.

POW VA BENEFITS

AF times Rick Maze article 27 Sep 07

The Department of Veterans Affairs is searching for prisoners of war who may not be getting the benefits they deserve. VA officials estimate that about 25,000 former prisoners of war are still alive today, about 600 from the Vietnam War, 2,100 from the Korean War and the rest from World War II. VA officials believe only about one-third are receiving any VA benefits or health care.

VA officials are trying to contact veterans who are not receiving any benefits or health care but who might be eligible. They are also trying to locate the surviving spouses and children of former POWs who might be unaware of the help VA could provide. VA officials said they have the most difficulty tracking down former POWs from World War II because the military used service numbers, not Social Security numbers, for identification. Tracking down a veteran by service number is extremely difficult if they have not had any contact with the VA in years, officials said.

In a statement, Veterans Affairs Secretary James Nicholson said meeting the needs of former POWs is "one of VA's highest priorities." "They are extraordinary men and women who have endured captivity, suffered

extreme deprivation and sacrificed their own freedom to preserve the freedom of all Americans," said Nicholson, himself a Vietnam veteran. Some former POWs may be unaware that available help has expanded over the years. For example, VA provides disability pay for former POWs who suffer strokes or some common heart diseases. To try to contact former POWs, VA officials have been reaching out to veterans' groups and civic organizations in search of leads. They are also encouraging people who know of former POWs to ask them to contact a VA toll-free number to learn about help that may be available. The number is (800) 827-1000. A similar effort several years ago resulted in about 1,000 former POWs or their survivors qualifying for VA assistance or increasing their existing benefits, VA officials said.

Every VA regional office also has a POW coordinator to help former POWs and their families receive benefits and health care. There are seven medical conditions for which a former POW can automatically receive disability benefits: psychosis; depressive neurosis; post-traumatic osteoarthritis; anxiety; cold-related injuries; strokes or stroke complications; and heart disease and related heart complications. Veterans who were held as POWs for 30 days or longer may be eligible for benefits if they have other conditions. These include: avitaminosis, chronic dysentery, helminthiasis, malnutrition, peptic ulcers, beriberi, cirrhosis of the liver, irritable bowel syndrome, nutritional deficiencies and peripheral neuropathy. In each case, the presence of one of the medical conditions in a former POW will



(516) 887-7100 Fax (516) 887-7175

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK, INC.
200 Atlantic Avenue, Lynbrook, New York 11563



OCTOBER 2007 NEWSLETTER

be presumed to have resulted from their military service qualifying them for

Details on benefits and health care for former POWs and their families are available at

<http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Benefits/POW/index.htm>.

OVERSEAS HOLIDAY MAILING

Source: Armed Forces News 12 Oct 07

Officials at the Military Postal Service Agency in Washington have established dates for sending mail from the United States to overseas military mailing addressees for the holidays.

In order to get holiday gifts to deployed service members by December 25th, mailers should heed the U.S. Postal Service's suggested deadlines. Parcel post packages to deployed troops and those living on overseas installations should be sent by November 13th. Customers missing the parcel post deadline have the following options:

Space-Available Mail (SAM) - Nov 27th

Parcel Airlift Mail (PAL) - Dec 4th
(except for ZIP codes starting with 093, which is Dec 1st)

Priority Mail and first-class letters and cards - Dec 11th (093 ZIP codes: Dec 4th)

Express Mail Military Services - Dec 18th (not available to 093 ZIP codes).

Parcel post packages sent to arrive by the start of Hanukkah at sundown Dec 4th should be mailed by Oct 23rd.

disability benefits unless there is evidence of another cause.

For other Hanukkah mailings, subtract 21 days from the deadlines listed above. To check mailing costs, visit

<http://www.usps.com>.

A NOTE FROM - LARRY D'ANGELO

Comrades:

I work at the Fort Myers Florida VA Clinic and I am an ACCREDITED DSO. I have full access to Veterans Claims in the VA Computer System, as long as the DAV holds the POA.

Could you please put a note in the newsletter that if any of the NY members are in southwest Florida and want to check, or need assistance with their claim, I would be glad to check on their claim and help them if need be. My info is as follows:

Phone 239-939-3939 ext 6405

mail is larrydav94@embarmail.com or d'angelo.larry-john@bay-pines.med.va.gov

Yours in Comradeship,
Larry D'Angelo (DAV- NY Chapter 143)

VA FLU SHOTS

Flu season will soon be here and veterans, especially the more elderly, are encouraged to get their shots. Most VA Medical Centers (VAMCs) are making preparations to administer these shots at no charge to enrolled veterans. If in doubt whether or not yours will be scheduling shots it is recommended you contact them. Shots are at no charge to



(516) 887-7100 Fax (516) 887-7175



DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK, INC.
200 Atlantic Avenue, Lynbrook, New York 11563

OCTOBER 2007 NEWSLETTER

enrolled veterans who would normally pay \$20 to \$30 if they were to obtain them through local medical services.

VA CWT & IT

*Veterans Service Organizations Liaison,
Office of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs
notice*

Oct 2 2007

Veterans who have participated in these programs and received payments from VA as part of their therapy may have had their payments reported to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), if they received over \$600 in any year. The payments from these programs may have been treated as taxable income, based on IRS regulations in place at the time. The United States Tax Court has recently determined that the payments from these VA programs are not taxable because they are tax-exempt veterans' benefits. Veterans who reported CWT or IT work therapy program payments as taxable income may be eligible to file amended tax returns claiming refunds of the tax they paid on program payments. Veterans who reported these payments as taxable income are advised to speak with a tax advisor regarding this matter.

WASHINGTON REPORT

Source: NAUS: October 2, 2007

Senate Finally Passes NDAA

Last evening the Senate finally passed their version of the National Defense Authorization Bill (H.R. 1585) by a vote of 92-3. The bill now moves to conference with the House to work out differences. The bill faces a possible veto by President Bush over an expansion of federal hate-crime laws, unrelated to national defense but stuck

The Department of Veterans Affairs Compensated Work Therapy (CWT), and Incentive Therapy (IT) programs are work therapy programs intended to help veterans receiving treatment at VA Hospitals to return to employment.

in regardless, if that provision makes it through the conference.

Among the many amendments added to the bill are several NAUS goals and items of imminent interest to retirees and their families.

They include:

- The Lautenberg amendment to prohibit increases in TRICARE fees for FY2008 and to express the sense of the Senate that military service is unique and that military members have earned their benefit by virtue of their service and sacrifices.
- The Nelson amendment to eliminate the SBP/DIC offset and accelerate 30-year paid-up Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) coverage to Oct. 1, 2007.
- The Reid amendment providing full, immediate concurrent receipt to disabled retirees deemed "unemployable" by the VA retroactive to Jan. 1, 2005.
- An amendment by Sen. Lott concerning the Armed Forces Retirement Home. This amendment would prohibit "privatization" of the Home into a non-government charitable institution.



(516) 887-7100 Fax (516) 887-7175



DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK, INC.
200 Atlantic Avenue, Lynbrook, New York 11563

OCTOBER 2007 NEWSLETTER

- The Chambliss amendment to reduce the Reserve retirement age by three months for each 90 days served on active duty since 9/11/01.
- The Lincoln amendment to authorize Guard or reserve members to use their mobilization GI Bill benefits up to 10 years after separating from the Selected Reserve.

One NAUS supported provision that did not make the final bill as an amendment was the Clinton sponsored Postal Bill to provide vouchers for the families and loved ones of deployed troops in order to send free mail and packages to them. It is, however, in the House passed bill. Contact your elected officials and let them know that you want this small but important "Thank You" for our brave men and women in combat included in the final version of the NDAA.

Additionally the Wounded Warrior Act was reinserted into the NDAA. This legislation addresses the care and treatment of our wounded warriors. It

- Require Secretary of Defense to establish standards for housing for military outpatients and for military hospitals, clinics and specialty medical care facilities.
- Increase minimum severance pay to one year's basic pay for those separated for disabilities

would:

- End the inconsistent ratings awarded for the same disabilities by DoD and the VA.
- Provide for seamless transition from DoD to VA care by requiring the Secretaries of the DoD and VA to develop a comprehensive plan.
- Authorize \$50 million for improvements in diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of service members who have Traumatic Brain Injury or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.
- Authorize medically retired (Chapter 61) with 50 percent disabilities and higher to receive active duty medical benefits for three years after leaving active service.
- Authorize VA and military health care providers to provide urgent and emergency medical care and counseling to family members.
- Extend eligibility for VA healthcare for combat veterans from two years to five years after discharge.
- Establish a joint DoD/VA program to develop and implement a joint electronic health record.
- incurred in a combat zone or combat related operations, and six months basic pay for all others.
- Eliminate that severance pay be deducted from disability compensation for disabilities incurred in a combat zone or combat-related operations.



(516) 887-7100 Fax (516) 887-7175



DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK, INC.
200 Atlantic Avenue, Lynbrook, New York 11563

OCTOBER 2007 NEWSLETTER

NAUS hopes that the conference goes well and quickly and that there will be no further delays caused by non-germane debate on issues unrelated to National Defense.

VDBC Rolls Out Disability Report

On Wednesday, the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission released its final report after completing a comprehensive study of benefits provided veterans and their survivors for disabilities and deaths resulting from military service. The 13-member Commission, which includes NAUS President, retired Army MG Bill Matz, identified 113 recommendations and highlighted 14 that deserve the immediate attention of Congress, DoD and VA.

Of particular note is the Commission recommendation to immediately increase disability payments by up to 25 percent as part of the overall proposed changes to compensate for a disabled veteran's lost "quality of life."

Other important areas that the Commission addressed complement and bolster a number of NAUS goals. They include:

- Providing concurrent receipt to all disabled retired service members, including those medically retired (Chapter 61s) with fewer than 20 years of service.
- Eliminating the SBP/DIC offset for survivors.

- Establishing a holistic approach to PTSD that couples compensation, treatment and vocational assessment. The Commission report also suggested that a re-evaluation occur every two to three years to gauge treatment effectiveness and encourage wellness.
- Revision of the VA rating schedule, taking into account new approaches to treatment with periodic iterative review to keep up with medical advancement.

The report also asserts that there should be no "new" definition or distinction between combat-connected or service-connected disability. During a press conference to rollout the report, Commission Chairman LTG Terry Scott stated that because our young men and women are signed to serve 24 hours a day 7 days a week they should be covered for any condition or accident, unless it is a result of willful misconduct.

NAUS also applauds Commissioner Ken Jordan for saying during the press conference that taking care of wounded, injured and ill veterans is a "cost of national defense."

Though the Commission generally agreed with the report recently presented by the presidential commission, headed by former Sen. Bob Dole and former Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, two exceptions are noteworthy. First, in contrast to Dole/Shalala, the VDBC recommended that all service-connected disabilities should be compensated based on the severity of



(516) 887-7100 Fax (516) 887-7175

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK, INC.
200 Atlantic Avenue, Lynbrook, New York 11563



OCTOBER 2007 NEWSLETTER

the injury and not be limited to combat and combat-related injuries. And second, the VDBC disagreed that VA disability compensation should stop and be replaced with Social Security at retirement age.

NAUS will continue to press Congress and the administration to act on these recommendations and any subsequent legislation introduced. And

we encourage you to read the report and urge your elected members of Congress to act on it.

The report and executive summary are available at www.naus.org or at www.vetscommission.org. Also available is a NAUS press release at www.naus.org.

Bob Woodruff, working as co-anchor of ABC's "World News Tonight," was reporting on U.S. and Iraqi security forces when the tank he was riding in was hit on Jan. 29, 2006. The blast left the reporter with a traumatic brain injury. Today, the Bob Woodruff Family Fund works with private industry and government entities to develop public awareness and advance the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of traumatic brain injuries. For more information, visit the [Bob Woodruff Family Fund for Traumatic Brain Injury website](http://www.bobwoodruff.com).

HEALTH CARE NEWS

Medicare Premium Rates to Rise Slightly

Source: NAUS: October 5, 2007

The Medicare Part B monthly premium will be \$96.40 in 2008, an increase of \$2.90, or 3.1 percent, from the \$93.50 Part B premium for 2007. It is the smallest percentage increase in the Part B premium since 2000.

Most beneficiaries will continue to pay the standard premium. However, beginning in 2007, beneficiaries with higher incomes (individuals with income exceeding \$80,000 and married couples with income exceeding \$160,000) began paying a higher Part B premium based on their income. Depending on their income bracket, these individuals will pay from \$122.20 to \$238.40 for their monthly premium.

Additional information about Medicare can be found at www.medicare.gov or by contacting your local Social Security office.

BOB WOODRUFF FAMILY

Source: NAUS: October 12, 2007

TAPS

Department has been notified that the following comrades have been called into final formation above:

Jack LaMonica, Chapter #143
Commander, 10/07
Floyd Jensen, Chapter #153 Past
Commander, 10/07

Department and the membership extend deepest sympathies to the family members, friends and comrades of these fallen heroes. May each one rest in honor.



(516) 887-7100 Fax (516) 887-7175

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK, INC.
200 Atlantic Avenue, Lynbrook, New York 11563



OCTOBER 2007 NEWSLETTER

Please feel free to call, write or e-mail davny@optonline.net Headquarters if you have a loss in your Chapter that you would like to include in this column.

Department of New York's 87th Anniversary Celebration

Sunday May 18, 2008
El Caribe Country Club
Brooklyn, New York

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2008 Mid Winter Conference

March 2, 2008 to March 5, 2008
Crystal Gateway Marriott
Arlington, VA 22202

State Executive Committee and Seminars

March 28, 2008 to March 30, 2008
Hudson Valley Resort
Kerhonkson, New York

Department of New York Convention

June 22, 2008 to June 25, 2008
Hudson Valley Resort
Kerhonkson, New York

2008 National DAV Convention

August 9, 2008 to August 12, 2008
Bally's Hotel Las Vegas
South Las Vegas, NV